

I. Amendments to the Specification

Kindly amend the Abstract of the Disclosure, as follows:

~~The technical field of the invention broadly relates to molding systems, and more particularly to a~~ A flexible shoe assembly for use in a molding system. The clamp unit of a molding system includes a moving platen and a stationary platen supported by a frame. Tie bars interconnect the moving platen with the stationary platen. The tie bars are secured to the stationary platen and pass through respective openings in the moving platen. Each tie bar is supported and guided within their respective openings by a flexible shoe assembly and wear pad. The flexible shoe assembly has a force redirector for directing force away from a peripheral edge of the wear pad towards a central force area. The flexible shoe assembly also includes a load distributor to distribute the load across the wear pad surface. The flexible shoe assembly includes an upper support that is flexible about a lower support to keep the wear pad in operational contact with the tie bar.

Kindly amend paragraphs [0061], [0069], [0070], and [0073] as follows:

[0061] The tie bar member 20c includes a substantially square inner section formed by four tie bar slots machined into the outer surface of the tie bar member 20c. The tie bar slots provides a ~~provide s~~ sliding surface to engage a wear pad. The substantially square inner section includes a top lengthwise slot 24b, a right lengthwise slot 24c, a bottom lengthwise slot 24d, and a left lengthwise slot 24a. The complimentary teeth in the tie bar

member lock 22a (not shown) pass over the tie bar slots (24a-24d) unrestricted in the unlocked position permitting the moving platen to pass over the tie bar member 20c.

[0069] When the bottom shoe assembly 30 and bottom wear pad 32 are located at the distant end of the tie bar member 20a at the maximum day light position, the leading edge 42 of the bottom wear pad 32 is subjected to higher stress than the trailing edge 44 due to the bending of the tie bar member 20c. In this configuration, the distant end of the tie bar member 20c tends to deflect away from the trailing edge 44 of the bottom wear pad 32 concentrating the force on a smaller area near the leading edge 42 ~~[[44]]~~ of the bottom wear pad 32.

[0070] When the bottom shoe assembly 30 and bottom wear pad 32 are located intermediate the two ends of the tie bar member 20c at the minimum shut height position, the trailing edge 44 of the bottom wear pad 32 is subjected to higher stress than the leading edge 42 ~~[[44]]~~ due to a different bending profile of the tie bar member 20c. In this configuration, the distant end of the tie bar member 20c tends to deflect downward concentrating the force on a smaller area near the trailing edge 44 ~~[[42]]~~ of the bottom wear pad 32.

[0073] The shoe assembly body 12 has a first slot 54 extending from an side outer edge of the body 12 inwardly towards a central web 52. A second slot 56 extends from an opposite side edge of the body 12 inwardly towards the central web 52. The first slot 54 and the second slot 56 are coplanar and equal in length and height. A first stress relieving

bore 76 is disposed at an end of the first slot 54 near the web 52 and a second stress relieving bore 78 is disposed at an end of the second slot 56 near the web 52 on the other side.